



## **Pedestrians to have access to area around Xcel Energy Center during RNC**

*Area remains open to visitors who want to witness history in the making*

August 29, 2008

Contact: Saint Paul Media Information (651) 603-9660

SAINT PAUL, Minn. – Pedestrians will be able to get close to the action during the upcoming Republican National Convention (RNC). Specifically, they will have access to the area around the Xcel Energy Center, including Rice Park, a section of West Seventh Street, and around St. Joseph's Hospital. These sites will be the backdrop for a variety of activities, including live television broadcasts and musical performances.

“The Republican National Convention will be an opportunity for the general public to witness history in the making while the world's eyes are on Saint Paul,” said Saint Paul Police Chief John Harrington. “The pedestrian access points will help people plan for how to get near the heart of the action, and help Saint Paul in its commitment to remain open and accessible during the convention.”

During the convention, people will not have direct access *through* the area immediately surrounding the Xcel Energy Center. Instead, there will be designated routes to the north and south of the area that will provide pedestrians access to specific locations inside the convention area. This will be a no-vehicle area beginning the evening of Friday, August 29, through next Friday, September 5.

These pedestrian access routes will be:

- North route: Chestnut Street to Walnut Street across Interstate 35E, following the sidewalk to Kellogg Boulevard, through the Minnesota History Center parking lot, down Tenth Street to St. Peter Street. This

- more-

will take pedestrians to parts of West Seventh Street and around St. Joseph's Hospital and Assumption Church.

- South route: Chestnut Street to Eagle Parkway to Shepard Road to Sibley Street to Kellogg Boulevard to St. Peter Street. This will give pedestrians access to Rice Park.

City crews will post signs directing people to the pedestrian access routes. Barricades will restrict cars from the area and additional signage will help direct vehicles away from the area. A Downtown Pedestrian Access map for the RNC can be found on the City's web site at [www.stpaul.gov](http://www.stpaul.gov).

The pedestrian access routes are for people who want to get close to the excitement surrounding the convention. People who work or live downtown and want to avoid convention events are advised to take alternate routes as posted on the City of Saint Paul's Web site: [stpaul.gov](http://stpaul.gov). Metro Transit buses will also be re-routed to help people navigate in and around downtown.

The pedestrian access points are part of the overall public safety plan that the City of Saint Paul, the Saint Paul Police Department, and their partners have spent nearly two years developing and implementing. Throughout the planning process, the City of Saint Paul and the Saint Paul Police Department have met with organizations based inside the no-vehicle area to provide them with information necessary for their own planning efforts.

### **Metro Transit Extends .50 Cent Downtown Routes 54, 70, and 74**

To help improve transit downtown during the convention, Metro Transit has extended its downtown 50 cent bus routes through September 5th. The change will make it easier for pedestrians to access areas impacted by the RNC traffic management plan around the arena via buses along routes 54, 70, and 74.

Riders will be able to get on and off at any of the stops along the route being serviced downtown and get on or off at 35E and Grand, or at 7th and Douglas (3 blocks West of Grand). Metro Transit has posted the stops affected and will monitor traffic during the convention to ensure there are enough buses to handle the passenger demand. For more information or a bus route map please visit [www.metrotransit.org](http://www.metrotransit.org)

The 2008 Republican National Convention (RNC) will be held September 1-4, 2008, at the Xcel Energy Center in Saint Paul.

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